

12/84

CLAIRE STERLING

• The idea that the Soviets coordinate worldwide terror from some subterranean map room is a comic book concept. The whole point of their plan is to contribute to terror by proxy, to let the other fellow do it. •

Mehmet Ali Agca shot and very nearly killed the Pope, John Paul II, in St. Peter's Square on the afternoon of May 13, 1981. Within two days Italian magistrates found evidence of an organized plot, yet the theory of Agca as Moslem fanatic and lone terrorist killer continued.

The CIA, the Reagan administration, even the Vatican, all were loath to see a larger design. No one, it seemed, was interested, despite the possibility that here was the biggest, most daring conspiracy of our times.

Enter Claire Sterling. An

American foreign correspondent in her mid-fifties, the mother of two, and nowadays living in Rome, Sterling had reported on European, Middle Eastern, and Asian affairs for over thirty years for *The New York Times*, *Reader's Digest*, the *Washington Post*, and *International Herald Tribune*. Her book *The Terror Network* (1981) carefully traced the connections among terrorist groups around the world, and now, refusing to accept official scenarios, she insisted there was more to the assassination attempt than met the eye. Her own scenario, after a year and a half of investigation,

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MUTH

•Killing the Pope would have eliminated the only man capable of generating real strength behind the Solidarity movement throughout the Soviet Bloc.♦

proved compelling, if complicated: "The Turkish mafia, operating out of Sofia under tight Bulgarian control, had picked the suitable hit man and provided suitable cover . . . to all appearances, this would be an international right-wing conspiracy, as remote from the Soviet Union as half a century of political folklore could make it."

As for motivation, everything pointed to Moscow. Yet Sterling's argument went further to include charges of "a monumental cover-up."

She claimed her investigation was being systematically thwarted by the U.S. intelligence community. Relentless reporters like herself had come to be regarded "as an international menace, threatening peace among nations if not the entire planetary order." Why? Because U.S. and other Western officials would rather not know about Russian complicity, partly in anticipation of another summit conference, partly out of a reluctance to admit Soviet ties to international terrorism.

A series of semiofficial leaks seemed to justify Sterling's allegation, and with the publication of her book, *The Time of The Assassins* (published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston), last winter, there were further denials despite coverage in virtually every major newspaper in America. In a Christmas visit to Agca's cell, the Pope forgave his assailant (photo, right). Six months afterward, in June 1984, however, the Italian judiciary filed its long-awaited report based on over 25,000 pages of documentation. The report's conclusions? That the Bulgarian secret services had indeed recruited Agca to shoot the Pope in a plot to weaken the Solidarity movement in Poland. Although the KGB was not mentioned by name, unmistakably clear was the suggestion that "some political figure of great power took note of this grave situation and, mindful of the vital needs of the Eastern bloc, decided it was necessary to kill Pope Wojtyla."

For William Safire, writing in *The New York Times*, it had all come to a head: "Now that the proof is about to be laid on the table . . . what is President Reagan's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board doing to find out why President Reagan was misled by the CIA on the most important terrorist plot in modern history?" For Secretary of State George Schultz, noting the mounting evidence, the attempted assassination was an ex-



SYGMA



SYGMA

ample of "state-sponsored terrorism" and an angry CIA Director William Casey quickly removed the agency's top spy in Italy for trying to sabotage the Italian investigation.

Sterling, it seemed, had been vindicated, and within weeks she was summoned to the White House to be debriefed by high-ranking representatives of the CIA, National Security Council, Department of Defense, attorney general's office, and the president's legal staff.

To sort out the implications of Sterling's lonely investigation, its ramifications and possible truths, *Penthouse* sent journalist Peter Manso to talk with the reporter immediately after the publication of her book and then, later, in the wake of her vindication. Manso comments: "My initial assumption was that Sterling was a typical neo-conservative burying a leftist past, since she'd freely admitted to a youthful Party membership. But aside from registering at her hotel under a precautionary pseudo-

nym, she displayed none of the hysteria usually found in cold warriors. On the contrary, unlike most journalists 'working' a story from either the right or left, she refused to get locked into a scenario, and flexibility, not stubbornness, marked our exchange. Our second meeting, months later, went the same way. Her thesis may not be airtight, and ultimately it may never be verifiable, but there's no denying the clear, unswerving focus of her account, which is nothing if not provocative. Here, as well as in her writing, her refusal to take shortcuts makes it only more sobering."

Penthouse: The great surprise, the revelation in your book was that Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turk who shot the Pope, did not act alone. What made you think that the story went far beyond the crazed lone assassin theory?

Sterling: On the day the Pope was shot I was in Los Angeles finishing my promotion tour for my earlier book, *The Terror Network*. Since it included a chapter on Turkish terrorism I was the only source anybody could think of who might be able to explain Agca. I just went 24 hours straight—doing television, radio, and wire service interviews—since there was such a tremendous response on the day of the shooting. Then in late September 1981, four months later, the presiding judge in Agca's trial published a 50-page "Statement of Motivation" saying that Agca was neither crazy nor a religious fanatic but rather a professional hit man, adding, "In our efforts to find who sent him we have run into an impenetrable barrier of silence."

Penthouse: So you took the bit between your teeth?

Sterling: Of course, and there were two press scenarios guiding me. One quoted the examining magistrate: "For us there is documented proof that Agca did not act alone." The other from *The New York Times* of the same date, May 15, said, "Police are convinced according to government sources that Agca acted alone." Then I went to Agca's trial in July 1981, just two months later. It was a quick trial, lasting only 48 hours, and the state prosecutor came out with this incredible harangue: "Agca was a loner, a delirious ideologue, a fanatic Moslem who came from nowhere." Agca got life imprisonment, but then Judge Santiapichi, the presiding judge and a very honorable man enormously respected throughout Italy, published the court's verdict and in explaining it totally reversed what the prosecutor had said. The prosecutor, though, would not introduce evidence indicating anything except that Agca had fired the gun, and that's when I thought, "I've gotta find out why." I had no idea what was going to come

out in Agca's confessions. Only later did I learn that when he was seized in St. Peter's Square, he had the telephone numbers of five Bulgarians in his pocket.

Penthouse: What had you found out about Agca himself?

Sterling: He was a very repressed, inward-looking, tormented kid. After he went off to the university at Ankara, he had no known source of income except a small allowance from the state. Somebody took his entrance exams for him: In fact, there's no record of his taking any exams.

Penthouse: And his political activities as a student?

Sterling: None. He was registered at the University of Ankara in 1977 and 1978 when terrorism was raging and students were killing each other in the dormitories. His name never cropped up in connection with any kind of violent action on the campus.

Penthouse: The conclusion being that he had no political commitments?

Sterling: Or else he was keeping out of the limelight, being kept quiet by others who were paying him and didn't want him identified. Nobody

knows where his money came from.

Yet after leaving Ankara for Istanbul where he also was registered as a student, he lived very high. He moved from one expensive hotel to another, ate in the best restaurants, wore fancy suits and gold watches. In Istanbul, though, there's again no academic record. He was a blank, a zero until, two years before he shot the Pope, he confessed to the murder of Abdi Ipekci, Turkey's most respected journalist.

Penthouse: Were there links to the Bulgarians at that point?

Sterling: Abdi Ipekci was a Social Democrat, a man of the center who was fighting an almost solitary battle against both the extreme left and right wing. He was gunned down in his car on February 1, 1979, and Agca was arrested on an anonymous tip. There was no real evidence against him, just a faint resemblance to an Identikit sketch, yet Agca—this tough, ambitious kid—confessed right off the bat and claimed he did it alone. There's no question that he probably participated but he certainly did not act alone, as the minister of the interior

OWN THE ORIGINAL PENTHOUSE PHOTOS OF VANESSA!



Own one (or more!) of these original, archival quality prints of former Miss America, Vanessa Williams, that shocked the world with their publication in the September, 15th Anniversary Issue of *Penthouse*. Each photograph is part of a numbered, limited edition up to 500, mounted on acid-free board suitable for framing and is signed personally by photographer Tom Chiapel. You may order your prints in two sizes:

11" x 14" prints are \$75.00 each, and 16" x 20" prints are \$150.00 each. Please order photos by number and mail check or money order plus \$2.00 postage and handling to: **Vanessa Photo Offer, 1965 Broadway, New York, NY 10023**. New York residents add 8 1/4% sales tax. Signed check or money order constitutes orderer's warranty that orderer is over 18 years of age.

PENTHOUSE

who supervised the interrogation confirmed. In fact the Turkish military tribunal has recently issued a new indictment of 11 people—some of them were Gray Wolves, Turkey's right-wing terrorists. But it turns out Ipekci was murdered because he was investigating the Turkish mafia, so it wasn't a political hit at all.

Nonetheless, Agca was prepared to take the fall. He was paid to do so and was promised he'd be let out of prison—and he was. Five months after his arrest he escaped while dressed in a military uniform, passing eight heavily guarded doors, the guards themselves having been paid. We now know this because the Turkish godfather, Bekir Celenk, the head of the Turkish mafia, has admitted that he had Agca taken straight to Bulgaria after the escape. It was when he went back to Bulgaria in summer 1980 that he supposedly received an offer of 2 million marks to kill the Pope. But the basic story Agca himself told was that in Sofia Celenk personally presented him to three Bulgarian agents and was responsible for his connections in Munich, Brussels, London, Frankfurt, and Milan. In Rome several additional meetings took place in the home of one of the Bulgarians where they worked out the assassination strategy.

Penthouse: The three agents were Sergei Antonov, plus the assistant military attaché, Todor Aivasov, and Zhelyo Vasilev, the treasurer of the Bulgarian embassy?

Sterling: Yes, but Antonov didn't have the diplomatic status of the others since he was deputy director of the Bulgarian airlines. Agca said they went together to St. Peter's Square for three dress rehearsals and then on the day of the hit all met near the railroad station; it was understood that Agca would meet them outside the Colonnades after the hit.

Penthouse: Wasn't Agca actually grabbed by a nun after he fired the gun?

Sterling: Right. Suor Letizia, a tiny Italian nun, weighing maybe 80 or 90 pounds, was standing behind him and grabbed him. He was shouting, "Not me!" and she was saying, "Sei tu, sei tu," at the top of her voice. "It's thou, it's thee." Meanwhile the people in the crowd hadn't realized what had happened until the carabinieri arrived. By then there was no way Agca could be shot, which had been part of the original game plan. He was to have been bumped off right then and there in the square.

Penthouse: Yet you say that Agca's not stupid but that in fact he's artful. If he'd been successful wouldn't he have had to worry about the Bulgarians?

Sterling: He took out insurance. When he was arrested he was carrying those five telephone numbers—among them Antonov's unlisted home number as well as Aivasov's. Then he did exactly what he'd done after being arrested for killing Ipekci—he sent out signals. His interrogators didn't catch on right away, but he

was telling them things which he knew would get back to the Turkish authorities and eventually to his sponsors. Namely, that he had been in Bulgaria the summer of 1980.

Penthouse: And it was at this point that the authorities began to suspect he hadn't acted alone?

Sterling: At first he continued to lie. As any Italian judge who's handled terrorist killers will tell you, all of them feel the need to prove themselves, to overdramatize. In the case of Agca the authorities had a very unusual young man, absolutely not crazy, not at all a religious fanatic but, instead, ambitious for money and fame, which were his real motivations.

Penthouse: Nonetheless, with a target like the Pope surely there were more experienced people around. Why was Agca chosen?

Sterling: Because since 1965 when KGB agents were caught trying to assassinate a Russian exile in Germany, which made

intention of the editorial writer was to say Andropov himself might not have known, that involvement could easily have been confined to a lower level. Given the way the Soviet system works, though, it's just not possible. Brezhnev and the Politburo had to have approved the hit, then Andropov would've had to approve it personally and see to the mechanics of carrying it out.

Penthouse: There's absolutely no way it could have been a "vest-pocket" operation?

Sterling: No, no, no. Any Sovietologist will tell you that vest-pocket operations are simply impossible in the Soviet Union. Things are too tightly structured. When a decision like an assassination is made, it has to be made at the top. Brezhnev would have to have said, "You, Andropov, see to it. Do whatever's necessary. Figure out a plan."

Penthouse: Even so, there's still the basic question: Why the Pope?

Sterling: Because from the time John Paul II was chosen in fall 1978, the Politburo was keeping a very careful eye on him. The Pope sent Brezhnev a letter by courier, handwritten in Russian, in connection with the Solidarity movement, saying that if the Soviets invaded Poland he, the Pope, would lay down the crown of St. Peter and go to Poland to stand side by side with his people. As a result, by March 1981 the Russians were calling the Pope "a cunning and dangerous ideological enemy," and "a malicious, lowly, perfidious and backward toady of the American militarists, fighting socialism in the interests of his accomplices and his new boss in the White House." That's a direct quote and it's one of the strongest statements of its kind to come out of the Politburo.

Penthouse: Yet, had the assassination been successful, Poland might have exploded. The risks don't seem tenable; the liabilities were enormous.

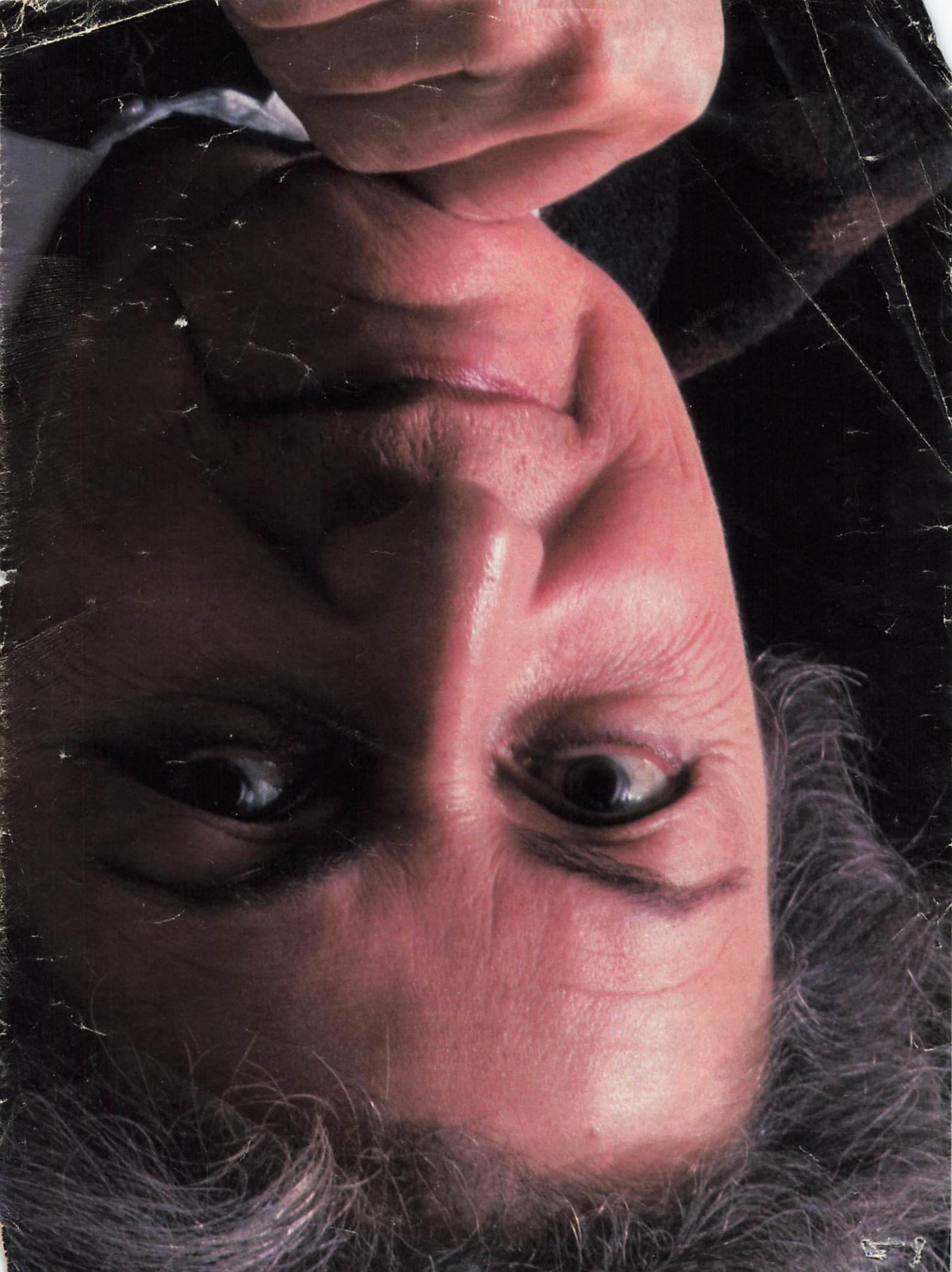
Sterling: The Poles believe that the Russians were behind it anyway. Walesa didn't doubt it for a minute. But suppose the Pope had died and the Poles had rioted, wouldn't it have been the ideal excuse for the Russians to send military forces into Poland? The essential benefit for them of killing the Pope, though, would have been the elimination of the only man capable of generating real strength behind Solidarity—not only in Poland but throughout the Soviet bloc. Moreover, the Vatican would never put another man like him in again. The Vatican has appeased the Russians. Just look at the way the Vatican reacted to the assassination attempt while the Pope was too weak to be able to govern: the papal secretary of state claimed that there was no conspiracy, that Agca was a lone gunman. But by the time of Agca's trial the Pope was recovering and suddenly three editorials in the *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican daily, said, "This isn't good enough. The bigger mystery remains of who sent him."

By carefully planned suicide attack in Lebanon, the Iranian and Syrian intelligence services were able to change the whole direction of American policy in the Middle East.

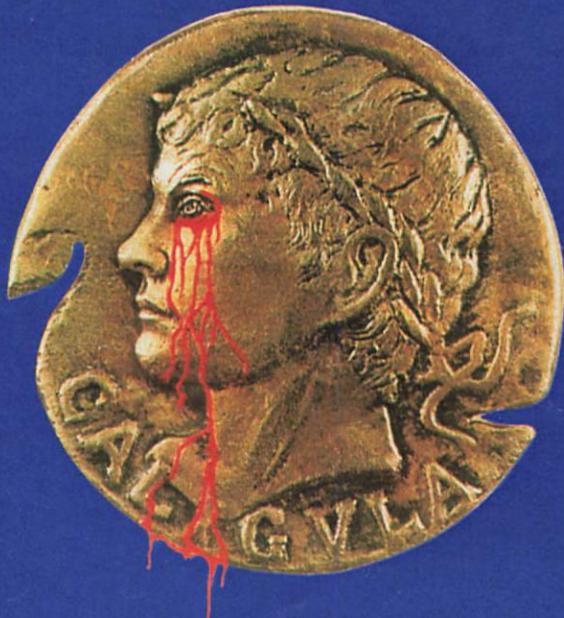
a big scandal in the European press, the Politburo decided the KGB must not do its own wetwork abroad. Jobs like that had to be farmed out, and from then on Bulgaria became the hit-man section. Conveniently enough, Bulgaria's other big job for the Russians was the destabilization of Turkey. In Agca they had the extra bonus of using a Moslem Turk, nominally a right-winger. He had the cover. A truly professional-looking hit by a mercenary raises suspicion. They wanted someone who looked like a crank, a kook, or perhaps a terrorist from a well-identified group as far from the Communist bloc as possible.

Penthouse: Is it conceivable that the Bulgarians thought they were using Agca for some job that didn't require Soviet authorization?

Sterling: That objection is in response to a suggestion made in *The New York Times* that some middle official in Bulgarian intelligence might have known what Agca intended to do and didn't stop him, or even that some middle official in the KGB might've known but not the higher-ups. That kind of sleazy conspiracy theory is all too familiar to Americans. The clear



CALIGULA NOW ON VIDEO



**THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL FILM IN HISTORY
THE ORIGINAL, UNCUT, X-RATED VERSION FOR ONLY \$89.95**

STARRING

MALCOLM McDOWELL, TERESA ANN SAVOY, HELEN MIRREN, AND
PETER O'TOOLE. WITH JOHN GIELGUD AS NERVA.

PRODUCED BY BOB GUCCIONE AND FRANCO ROSELLINI.

PENTHOUSE® VIDEO

PENTHOUSE PRODUCTS
P.O. BOX 6500, ENGLEWOOD, NJ 07631

Please rush me the original X version of Caligula (156 minutes) for
only \$89.95 plus \$3.00 postage and handling per tape.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please indicate: VHS (CFV) BETA (CFB)

Check enclosed Money order enclosed

Visa MasterCard American Express

Acct. #: _____ Exp. date: _____

Interbank # for MasterCard: _____

CREDIT CARD HOLDERS CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-526-4797

Payment must accompany order. Rates for U.S. only. Canada add \$5.00
for postage and handling. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. No foreign orders.

157

Penthouse: Go at it from another angle: Since the Italian court revealed its findings linking Agca with the Bulgarians, your severest critics have balked at accepting the Soviet role in the assassination, claiming there is no hard evidence to implicate the KGB.

Sterling: Yes they have. But if the public chooses to deceive itself, that's up to the public. No court in the Western world can get hard evidence to implicate an individual in the Soviet Union, nor is any court going to try a nation for moral irresponsibility. That's not its job. In this case the Italian court apparently has evidence that three Bulgarian citizens plus their embassy, which is an official organization of the Bulgarian communist state, were working members of the DS, the Bulgarian security service. The court has said this flatly, without condition.

Penthouse: Until recently the Reagan administration and our intelligence community have also refused to acknowledge possible Soviet complicity. You've spoken of a "monumental cover-up." Why has the administration been so disinclined to take your findings seriously?

Sterling: Not only *my* findings, the court's findings. But I think this may be changing. Essentially Reagan has had a political expediency problem. His advisors must have pointed out that it would be politically disadvantageous to accept my conclusion publicly. Apart from that, Reagan has been misinformed or just poorly informed by his intelligence community. The Rome station of the CIA refused to concede any substance to the Bulgarian connection, while even CIA headquarters in Langley failed to order an investigation. I know that to be a fact. I've talked to top people who tried to explain it—ranking CIA operatives in Washington—and it's now clear to me that the civil service level of the agency has maintained a belief that the Soviet leaders are cautious and conservative; anything indicating they may have taken a wild risk is excluded from their thinking. It's intellectual cowardice and laziness—also egotism in the sense that they're unwilling to contradict the position they've worked up over the years. By the late 1940s, after the Second World War, there was a tremendous feeling that the Soviets had been our ally. That was the seed of the misconception: the belief that the Russians were okay. We had a few brave responses like the airlift in Berlin and the Truman Doctrine in Greece and Turkey, but then what did we see? By 1956 we saw a genuine uprising in Hungary encouraged by Radio Free Europe, but there was never the smallest intention in Western circles to help the Hungarian rebels. The same thing happened in Czechoslovakia in 1968, then in Poland in 1970, and most recently in Afghanistan.

Penthouse: Which is what you were referring to when you wrote, "Even President Reagan, who did not hesitate to accuse the Russians soon after taking office of 'reserving the right to commit any crime, to lie, to cheat,' is ducking the question of possible Kremlin complicity now?"

Sterling: Right. That's exactly what I say is wrong in general. It's another example of the perpetual disinclination of Western leaders to confront the Russians with their darker sins.

Penthouse: And this very misconception of the Soviets extends even to the likes of Caspar Weinberger?

Sterling: Correct. Not a single member of the administration from any source—Intelligence and Research in the State Department, the State Department's Office for Combating Terrorism, its Bulgarian desk or Italian desk, nobody in the CIA, nobody in Defense Intelligence or the Defense Department—until recently ab-

some advice on how to protect myself, what to look for, and so on. The general said, "Who told you this?" I said, "The American embassy." He said, "And they told you they got it from us? They couldn't have. If it came from us it would've passed my desk, and I've never heard about this before." Three weeks later he returned to my house and said, "It's now come to my desk that you're on the Bulgarian hit list." I said, "Where did it come from?" and he said it came from the Interior Ministry. And I said, "Well, the Interior Ministry doesn't have agents abroad, how would they know that?" to which he replied that it had come from the American embassy. After that I talked to the general several more times and we discussed the CIA's attitude toward the Italian judicial investigation, its unwillingness to share information with SISMI, the CIA's opposite number in Italy. The general said he got no help from the CIA, explaining, "We're really blocked by the embassy, and all around we've been getting no help from the Americans." My feeling was that this was the first warning, that the CIA was trying to frighten me off from doing the book. Then I became aware of the big plants of information from the U.S. intelligence community in *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Marvin Kalb

and I, for example, had both seen the coolness of the reaction in Washington to our respective stories—mine in August and Marvin's TV piece on the Bulgarians in September. In fact, I was at his house when his NBC white paper aired and the phone began to ring directly afterwards, with all his pals in the Washington press corps saying, "Oh, gee, that was a great show, Marvin. But come on, you don't really believe this stuff about the Bulgarians, do you?" With me, it went even further. When I was back in the States doing my promotional tour for *The Time of the Assassins* I got a call from a friend in Washington who told me a mutual friend of ours, a retired high-ranking CIA official, had called her to say that he had heard that I had just thrown in the towel and was going back home to Europe because I was finding the whole thing a flop, that nobody cared or was listening to what I had to say. It was an attempt to discourage me as if to say: "Give it up, kid. Who are you trying to fight, City Hall?" I don't want to sound nutty on the subject, but I feel barriers were being put up by people who didn't want me to get the word out. Why? Because the administration was afraid to create a destabilizing situation. Their anti-Soviet rhetoric notwithstanding, they've always been afraid of that.

Penthouse: Turn it around, though. What are their options? How would you have handled the Bulgarian connection if you had been in Reagan's shoes?

Sterling: I would have begun long before. Now, though, I'd say to the Soviet Union, "It's time to discuss aspects of your foreign policy which take the form of su-

First Brezhnev and
the Soviet Politburo would
have had to approve
the hit on the Pope, then
Andropov would have
personally seen to the
mechanics of carrying it out.

solutely nobody called to ask, "Could you tell us a little bit more about the evidence that was not safe to publish in your *Reader's Digest* article?"

Penthouse: Did the CIA attempt to block your research, actually stand in your way?

Sterling: I think they've tried to frighten me. At the end of November 1982, after I wrote my piece for *Reader's Digest* and Antonov was arrested and the case was beginning to draw blood, an old acquaintance, somebody in a position to know, told me, "I don't want to alarm you, but we have reason to believe that you're on the Bulgarian hit list." "What do you think I ought to do?" I asked, and he said, "Well, we've gotten this information from the Italian Secret Service and if I were you I'd get out of town and let things cool off." This didn't seem awfully helpful advice to me, so I tried to get through to the chief of station in Rome and was told the chief of station does not speak to journalists. Then I called a friend who was well connected through government channels with the Italian Secret Service. They very kindly sent a general with an aide over to my apartment. I explained what I had been told and that I wanted

This little Panasonic gives you giant Ambience™ Sound and preset equalizers. Where you take it is up to you.

To the park. To the beach. To parties. This Platinum Series,™ AM/FM stereo cassette recorder has Panasonic preset equalizers plus Ambience Sound. To take you places ordinary stereo never could.

Panasonic Ambience Sound goes ordinary stereo one better. It actually surrounds you with sound. And with our four exclusive preset equalizers you can shape that

sound to just your style. Sixteen different ways.

And when you travel you'll be going in style. This little miracle of compact portability has all the latest features. Like a four-speaker system. Auto-Stop. One-touch recording. And not one, but two built-in condenser mikes. For live stereo recording.

So take yourself to your nearest Panasonic dealer. Get the RX-F4. There's no telling how far it will take you.

Batteries not included.

Panasonic
just slightly ahead of our time.



rogate warfare on Western leaders. We know on which dates who was used to do what—including the assassination attempt on the Pope—and when we negotiate in the future we, the United States, want to know your intentions. We're watching you. The world community is aware of what you've been up to."

Penthouse: Compared to other intelligence services how good is the CIA? You've said that the French warned the Vatican of the assassination plot—are the French better than the CIA?

Sterling: For intelligence gathering, I would say no. What the CIA lacks is the capacity to analyze the intelligence it gathers, and that's where they have been consistently bad for years. They can probably do more than any existing intelligence agency in the world to make penetrations and get information, but what makes them less effective than the Mossad, for example, is their failure to see the point of what they're gathering, to make the kind of appraisal that makes intelligence gathering useful. Part of the problem is attitudinal and it goes back to Vietnam. During those years the agency's posture, its behavior, everything about them was terrible. The United States became the most hated country around and the CIA became the most hated intelligence service, such that, as a result, people in the agency felt, "We're not gonna take any more of this shit. We're gonna withdraw into the innermost limits of our functions and do only what we have to do, no longer stick our necks out and do anything confrontational."

Penthouse: And the KGB?

Sterling: It's very good because it's so big. Even though it may fumble a lot and have a lot of clunks in it, it can make up for that in sheer size.

Penthouse: And Cuban intelligence, the DGI?

Sterling: They're as good as the KGB because they're run by the KGB, you can't separate them. Ditto for the East Germans, who are assigned by the KGB to handle the training of security forces in Third World countries—like the Libyans, for example, who constitute the security force in South Yemen. During the fifteen years Andropov ran the KGB, he greatly expanded its size and function by developing the use of surrogate systems to divide up the work: The Czechs are mostly involved in providing military equipment, including the manufacture, distribution, and design of military equipment; the Poles do political, more than military, intelligence gathering; and the Bulgarians have always had the dirty tricks department—the wetwork, the killings, and kidnappings.

Penthouse: Is the perfidiousness of the Soviet leadership really this limitless, as straightforward as you seem to be suggesting?

Sterling: Very nearly limitless. There's no doubt that the Soviets have been encouraged by the continuing shield they've

had from the West since 1972. For them detente meant they could do anything they pleased.

Penthouse: But terrorism, which you say is being choreographed by Moscow, certainly existed before 1972.

Sterling: There's always been terrorism, even organized terrorism, but what we've seen since 1968 crosses national frontiers. I'm talking about terrorism of the left. Right-wing terrorism goes back much further, to the 1930s. But that, too, has had its recent international interlocks, certainly in Europe.

Penthouse: Why 1968?

Sterling: Because, globally, 1968 dates the protest movement which reached almost insurrectionary proportions and was capable of paralyzing universities, intimidating politicians, and making an impact on public opinion. It seems to have started

in Berkeley but it spread all the way to Tokyo. Some of it was Marxist-Leninist, some of it was anarchist, some was just uninformed, nonideological protest. The tone was peaceful, but even among the flower children the acts of protest brought to the surface groups which had an avocation for violence—whether psychological or political or a combination of both. Some individuals in these groups had psychotic personalities. Others had absolutely clear, balanced political minds and deliberately chose violence as a "political necessity."

Penthouse: Which in turn fueled the Soviets?

Sterling: In looking at what we were doing in Vietnam the generation of the 1960s refused to look at what was happening on the other side too; the point of view was that all evil emanated from the Pen-

Advertisement

Hair Loss . . . Male Pattern Baldness

What is the real cause? What can be done about it?

For years we have all read and heard a lot of misinformation about the causes of common hair loss and baldness (often called male pattern baldness) and about so called cures or methods to treat it. Most of these "cures" and "treatments" are very expensive, consist largely of water and do not work. Below, we explain the real, scientific reason for this problem, and what our research and testing have shown can be done about it.

Medical researchers know that dihydrotestosterone, a hormone formed by metabolism of the male hormone testosterone or from cholesterol, causes hair follicles to go into their resting phase; this means that the follicles quit producing hairs. Follicles in certain areas of the scalp of genetically predisposed people contain an enzyme called 5 alpha reductase. This enzyme converts testosterone to dihydrotestosterone. Dihydrotestosterone makes the hair stop growing, resulting in the condition commonly referred to as male pattern baldness. This condition occurs more often in men but may also occur in women. Male pattern baldness is also referred to as pattern baldness, common baldness and androgenetic alopecia (baldness).

The hair follicles affected by dihydrotestosterone are not "dead" but are only in their resting (non-growth) phase. P/80 Products, in cooperation with outside chemists and product development specialists, has developed and tested a unique new formula that when used according to directions removes excessive testosterone and cholesterol from the scalp and the hair follicles. By reducing testosterone and cholesterol levels, this formula inhibits the production of dihydrotestosterone. It also dissolves waxy deposits of sebum that accumulate in and around the hair follicles. The hair follicles are then

allowed to function in a more normal and effective manner. In addition, this new formula activates the release of histamine, a natural growth factor in the skin. Histamine release is essential for cell growth and reproduction.

This new formula is called P/80 Hair Growth and Maintenance Treatment and it has been shown effective in treating male pattern baldness and hair loss. P/80 has substantially reduced hair fallout and caused new hair to begin growing within 12 weeks. If you are experiencing excessive hair loss, with little or no regrowth or if there is a history of hair loss and baldness in your family, try P/80 for 12 weeks. If you are not satisfied with the results, return the empty bottles for a prompt refund.

P/80 is easy to use and contains only active ingredients, with no added water, coloring, fragrance or other fillers.

We guarantee your money back if you are not satisfied after 12 weeks of use. However, P/80 is working for others and we believe you are not only going to be satisfied, but surprised and pleased with the results.

P/80 is priced at \$35.00 (including postage and handling) for a supply that will last approximately 3 months. (Residents of Alaska, Hawaii, and Canada please send \$36.90 to cover the additional postage.)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-621-2047
(In Colorado call collect 837-9410)**

**P/80 PRODUCTS, INC.
1860 Lincoln Street, #785-X
Denver, Colorado 80295**

**We accept Visa and Mastercard.
© 1984 P/80 Products, Inc.**

tagon or the White House or Langley. Look, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Red Brigade was formed. They started with ten members but didn't kill anybody until 1974, so until then we couldn't call them terrorists. On the contrary, they were being excused by many, many people, including myself. Then things changed. By 1977, they were kneecapping and killing several dozen people a year.

Penthouse: And the response of the press?

Sterling: The Italian press didn't dare concede that these were left-wing terrorists, not even then. Whenever there was a killing or kneecapping, the Communist Party, echoed by the socialist press and then the center, would say, "These actions have been committed by fascist agents provocateurs. Communists, Marxist-Leninists wouldn't do this." That was the intellectual community's line, and the press reflected it. The American press has done essentially the same thing. How many times have you seen *The New York Times* explaining that the Red Brigade existed because of the terrible social grievances in Italy, and that if those problems were solved the terrorists wouldn't be doing these things? The U.S. press continued with this attitude long after the European press began to understand.

Penthouse: Yet here in America, we haven't had such overt violence—certainly not on the scale you're talking about. *Sterling*: Oh yes, we have. Forty percent of all targets of international terrorism since 1968 have been American. We've had diplomats and businessmen kidnapped and murdered, our embassies have been blown up, and of course there were the hostages in Iran.

I know I've been called paranoid but my conclusions are not reflexive; they're based on my years as a reporter, on years of research. And having done my research for *The Terrorist Network*, I'm convinced that the outbreak of left-wing terrorism during the 1970s is really part of the most extraordinary and riveting experiment in Marxist-Leninist revolution that we've seen since the October Revolution. The pattern, starting from the first move to undermine the authority of the czar, was to have a double-level assault—the open arm of propaganda and the hidden arm of military terrorism. So, for example, the open arm in Italy was called Workers Autonomy, and the hidden arm was the Red Brigade.

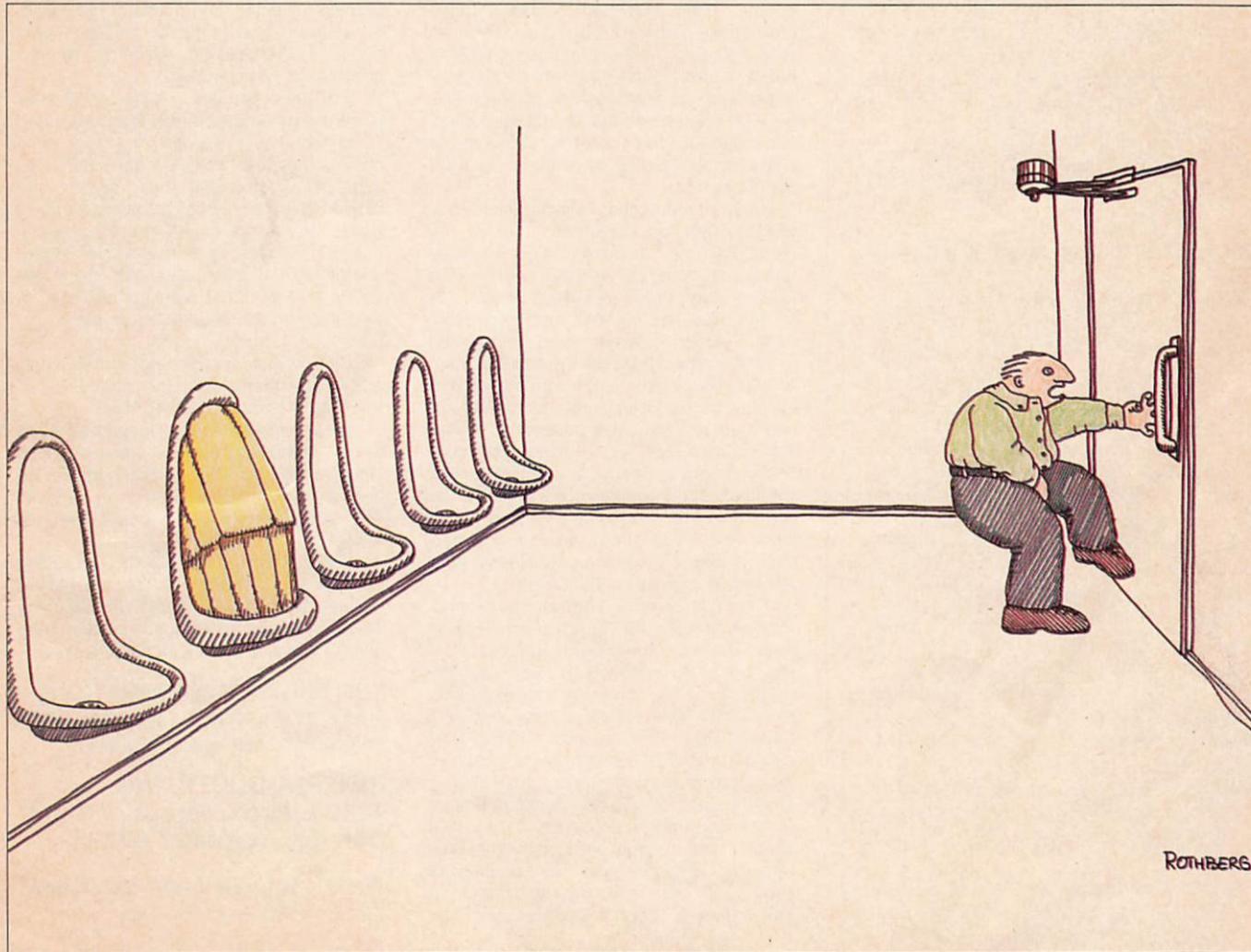
Penthouse: But for you it goes further: The Soviets, by sponsoring terrorists, have started a war.

Sterling: Absolutely, and we've been at war since the early 1970s.

Penthouse: Are you saying that the PLO, the IRA, the Red Brigade, Baader-Meinhof Gang, and the Weathermen *all* operate under the stewardship of Moscow? The Soviets are that well-organized?

Sterling: I have never suggested, nor would I dream of suggesting, that the Soviet Union has generated terrorism everywhere in the world. What I say is, that while all these terrorist groups are indigenous to specific social, political, and religious contexts, the Soviet Union has provided the wherewithal for their increasing expertise—weapons, training, and sanctuary—either directly or through surrogates. The idea of the Soviets co-ordinating worldwide terror from some subterranean map room is a comic book concept. The whole point of their plan is to contribute to continental terror by proxy, to let the other fellow do it. Take the best known terrorist of the past decade, Ilyich Ramirez Santez, a.k.a. "The Jackal." He was 16 years old when the Venezuelan Communist Party sent him for training to Cuba, then he went to Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow. Now, at Patrice Lumumba they don't teach terrorism, they teach revolutionary theory, but in the process they spot promising militarists and send them for guerrilla training elsewhere.

Penthouse: And where is the United



IN THE DECEMBER FORUM

THE GENITALS OF JESUS

The penis of Jesus Christ is deliberately touched, cupped, and solemnly adored in hundreds of Renaissance works of art. In some paintings, the Virgin Mother tenderly opens her Infant's legs to facilitate genital observation. Others depict her or St. Anne—grandmother of the Christ child—touching, fondling, or pointing to his member. Paul C. McWilliams explores the spiritual motives of the Renaissance masters in unveiling the loins of the Lord.

IN PRAISE OF WITHDRAWAL

Coitus interruptus is an unspeakable act to most Americans—crude, messy, not safe as a birth-control method. But Derek Yeates has successfully integrated it into his lovemaking repertoire over the last 20 years. He describes withdrawal as essentially a "relocating of orgasm," and goes on to discuss its various advantages as well as its drawbacks.

SEX GROUPIES: GOOD FOR A LAUGH

Stand-up comedians are the new stars of show business. Jack Mano is the pseudonym of one of the funniest. In this after-hours memoir he recounts the abundance of coke whores and groupies who sell their bodies to comics. "If you have a great sense of humor, but only a so-so sex life," he quips, "you might want to put together a comedy act."

THE FANTASY GAME

Eric Perry and his wife Kathy were reluctant to swing, but wanted sexual adventure. Then they met Peter and Ilene, who introduced them to sexual charades. As mutual arousal escalated, the skits became increasingly explicit. Yet the object of the game was neither a feverish foursome nor mate swapping. "When Kathy and I got home that night," Perry writes, "we could not keep our hands off of one another. We screwed ourselves to sleep."

ON YOUR NEWSSTAND NOW

States in all of this? You speak of the Soviets' use of surrogates and their long-range strategy of destabilization, but is there any real difference between these Soviet activities and the logistical support provided by America to right-wing governments and right-wing terrorism in Central America?

Sterling: There's one difference in that Soviet support has not been limited to left-wing terrorism. Also, it has been a generalized policy whereas CIA support for terrorist groups in certain Latin American states is the same thing since there's a difference in dimension. Mind you, this is not in any way to excuse what the United States has done in support of the right. It's simply to balance the picture by talking more about what the Soviet Union has done on the other side.

Penthouse: A corrective, if you will, to the liberal press?

Sterling: Yes, absolutely. Granted, up to a point, a comparison can be made to the CIA's attempts to knock off Castro or block a socialist experiment under Allende in Chile. Nevertheless, even the Chilean example is different from a global strategy of assault on free societies. Take Lebanon, the attack on our marines—I don't know of a better example to explain the phenomenon of terrorism and its uses as a form of surrogate warfare. Here we had troops installed in a country as part of a multinational force which had been agreed upon by four allies, with the consent of every major group in the Lebanese government as well as the PLO. You can argue whether it was wise or not, but that was the situation: a legitimate force, legitimately placed in this country by agreement. But, by the use of one carefully planned suicide squad, the Iranian and Syrian intelligence services were able to change the whole direction of American political and diplomatic policy in the Middle East. They forced us to run. The crisis began when the Syrians broke up the PLO, after which they took over the Druze and Shiite forces (which until that time had been more disposed to accept some kind of settlement), and then they moved in with the attack on our marines—using one terrorist to do their dirty work—whereupon they waited to see what we would do. It's typical of terrorist operations all over the world for the last 15 years: They mount an operation, then sit back and wait for the results. If a country could hold firm and say, "Do your worst, we're not going to legitimize you. We're going to pursue our policies, take the risks, and in the meantime try to beat you back," then things might be different.

But instead, Jesse Jackson got the pilot out and the first thing he said when he came back was, "Now's the time to pull our forces out. This is another Vietnam," so the reaction from the American public was to run. The response was perfectly logical, given that Americans understand very little about terrorism and the uses to which it can be put. But the government

gave in and we've been on the run ever since.

Penthouse: All of which amounts to strategic and military confusion, or a political move made in the face of a then upcoming election?

Sterling: Both. We're talking about a historically illiterate, cowardly, and politically ignorant reaction to a form of warfare which is destined to grow in intensity precisely because of the way we are reacting. But the Reagan administration is

much more to blame than the public because it's in a position to know more. The public is very badly informed, which I blame partly on television: the networks' reliance on encapsulated "instant" news instead of background analysis—you know, TV as entertainment. But to withdraw under this kind of fire, from two tiny, stinky foreign states—and their objective was not even a Palestinian state but a greater Syria and fundamentalist Moslem Iran—so that now we are losing every ounce of clout we need to achieve a negotiated settlement in the Middle East. Everybody is beating tracks to the door of Assad, who has become the key figure, whereas a year ago he was at the bottom of the heap. Even though he had something like 8,000 Soviet military counselors in his country George Bush and God-knows-who-else was saying, "Of course the Syrians don't really want to be a satellite of the Russians." But dammit, Syria is a satellite of the Russians; Assad can't move without them.

Penthouse: Isn't it possible, however, that democratic societies may be powerless in the face of terrorism? Short of starting a nuclear war, initiating a first strike, or for that matter lifting all restrictions on a cowboy CIA, what can be done?

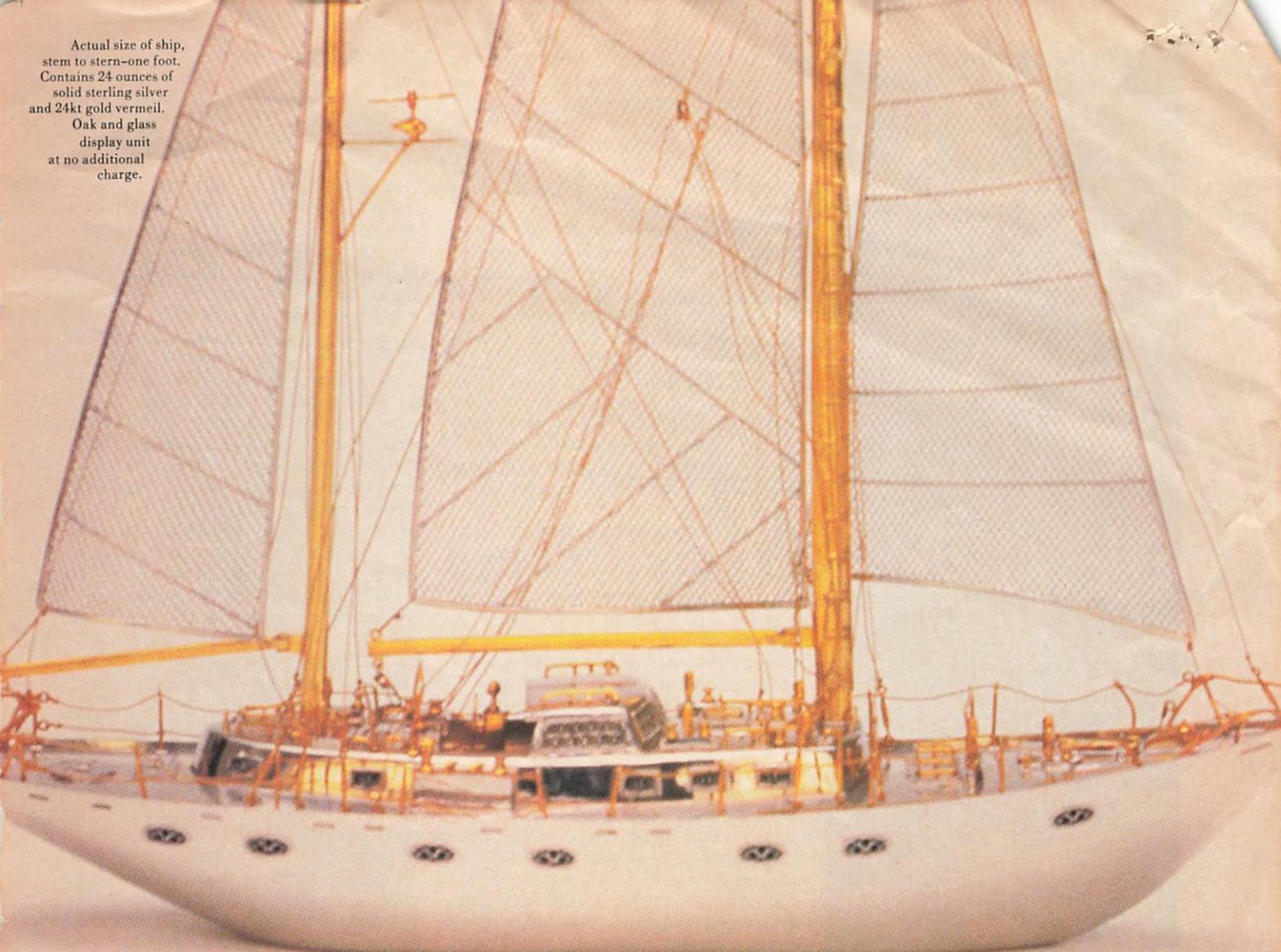
Sterling: If you have a resolute policy of opposing terrorism, you find out where they are and you hit them back. That's what the Israelis do; and, in fact, I find it immoral for the biggest, richest country in the world to be so cowardly as to say to the Israelis, "Okay, we can't cope with this problem, you do it." Because it is our problem. It's not just the Israelis' problem because by now it's gone far beyond that. But I would pool all of us who are target countries—who are being driven back, who are being increasingly endangered—and establish a chain, a pool for infiltration and preemptive intelligence.

Penthouse: Would you also sanction the United States engaging in a bit of terrorism of its own?

Sterling: I don't know if I'd call it terrorism, but I would use counterinsurgency forces as best indicated. More to the point, our whole diplomatic purpose should be directed at preventing the coagulation of these interests against us, and as I say, you don't do this by running. You hold the line. You educate people as to what's confronting us globally.

Penthouse: Then you're really talking about changing our long-standing notions of invincibility.

Actual size of ship,
stem to stern—one foot.
Contains 24 ounces of
solid sterling silver
and 24kt gold vermeil.
Oak and glass
display unit
at no additional
charge.



Your investment in this precious gold and silver ship pays off now with a free trip to China.

To mark Penthouse Magazine's 15th anniversary, Penthouse International has selected Silversmiths Group International to create this official commemorative edition of *The First Lady* in solid sterling silver and 24kt gold vermeil.

Offered exclusively to Penthouse and Omni readers, these rare works of art are a triumphant achievement in precious metal and are a remarkable tribute to the master silversmiths who spend two full months to create each model.

If you are one of the first 365 readers to acquire *The First Lady* at the issue price of \$2,975, you will be our free guest for a spectacular week-long celebration in the People's Republic of China starting this January.

This holiday will fulfill your wildest fantasies. It includes round-trip air transportation (West Coast), first-class hotels in Shanghai and Beijing, tours, banquets, parties and surprises galore. Our tour operators have also made special arrangements for extended travel and discounted fares for a companion.

In China you will witness the grand masters actually creating your *First Lady*. With ancient tools, they will meticulously hand-carve your model from raw chunks of silver and transform it into an individual masterpiece, right down to the dinghy and docking poles.

The First Lady is one of the most intricate models ever created by the renowned Silversmiths Group and the first

to be completed entirely by hand. Judging by past endeavors, it is fair to say it will be highly sought after by collectors and connoisseurs for its striking beauty and investment potential.

To ensure your free trip, respond quickly. You may reserve your model with a deposit of \$500, made payable to *First Lady Offer*, or call our toll-free number for credit-card orders and to be certain this offer is still available. Don't miss the boat...act today.

Call toll-free: 1-800-592-0999
Florida residents call: (305) 421-2200
First Lady Offer

Box 8527, Deerfield Beach, FL 33441
Limited to 1984 exemplars at official issue price of \$2,975 plus \$25.00 shipping and handling. (Florida residents add 5% tax.)



Give your lover something sexy to sing about!

What Xaviera Hollander has done for sexuality in her renowned book *The Happy Hooker* and in her columns for PENTHOUSE she now performs for your erotic listening pleasure. "Happily Hooked" is the titillating turn-on for liberated lovers! Use the handy order form below to order your copies of this collector's edition album in time for Christmas and birthdays. "Happily Hooked" is not available in stores. Order today! We'll be happy to include a card from you on all gift copies.

PENTHOUSE PRODUCTS, DEPT LBA 169, P.O. BOX 6500, ENGLEWOOD, NJ 07631

Yes! Please send me _____ copies of Xaviera Hollander's "Happily Hooked" collector's album. I have enclosed my check or money order in the amount of \$9.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (total \$11.95) for each album.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Sorry, we cannot accept shipments to P.O. boxes.

I am over 18 years of age. Signature _____

All payments must be in U.S. currency. NJ residents add 6% sales tax. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

STERLING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 184

Sterling: I guess so. But year after year I've seen terrorism escalate, and now I see it being used far more successfully, as the Russians and the Syrians and Iranians realize how easy it is to manipulate us. I also see a badly uninformed public, which is less willing to make sacrifices for important principles and which is burdened by an extraordinary inertia in finding out what is happening. On the other hand I do see changes, most notably on the part of the administration. Since the Italian court released its findings on the role of Bulgaria in the papal assassination plot, people are starting to wake up. And following my story in the *Times*, when I was asked to the White House, I got the sense that for a number of key people in Washington it wasn't enough to explain away the CIA's bumbling as another bureaucratic hang-up. Also, CIA Director Casey has canned the Rome station chief and replaced the director of operations. The important thing was that the tone of this gathering was very much "We don't understand how this thing happened to us. We've got to find out and not let it go on happening." Myself, I still don't understand but feel at least that people at the topmost level are now trying to understand in a new way.

200 PENTHOUSE

Penthouse: Who was at this meeting?

Sterling: The list read like the roster of the War Room, extraordinary people on an inner ministerial level. The new CIA director of operations, people from the National Security Council, from the attorney general's office, from the Department of Defense and the president's legal staff. We talked for two hours and they asked me to fill in background detail that I just couldn't pack into my report for the *Times*. They also wanted to know about how judicial procedure works in Italy and what kind of political pressures were on the Italian prosecutor.

Penthouse: Was there discussion about the administration—the whys and wherefores of its up-until-then silence on the Bulgarians?

Sterling: Yes, there was. Nobody in the room pretended to understand and I think they were genuinely baffled. They had just been given to understand that there wasn't enough for the judge to go on, and then they got this double whammy, and I think it shocked the hell out of them. "We can't let this go on happening," was their attitude, so I was encouraged. It was vindication of what I'd been saying all along, sure—but more to the point, I was encouraged. I'd been feeling so damned bruised and here they seemed to be taking a new look at the situation.

Penthouse: As would also be indicated by Secretary of State Schultz's statement

two weeks earlier in which he spoke of dramatically reversing U.S. policy of remaining silent on terrorism. Ditto for Casey's transfer of the Rome station chief. Still, where do you see it all heading? Do you realistically expect a significant change of posture on the part of the administration?

Sterling: Well, just a few days after my piece appeared in the *Times* there was a personal statement by Reagan himself saying that he would welcome the possibility of a summit meeting with the Russians. It certainly hasn't shaken those who are making policy to the point where they are backing off anything, and I don't think they should back off anything. They say that when and if the Russians and Bulgarians turn out to be convicted in a court of law that this will have to mean something in their diplomatic relations. Remember, though, it's not only Schultz who has talked about state-supported terrorism. By now Jeanne Kirkpatrick and four or five other very important figures have named the Soviet Union as bearing responsibility. Even more promising, I think, is that now even the CIA has conceded as much, and this has come from Democrats as well. At the Second Conference on International Terrorism, sponsored by the Jonathan Institute last June, the same sentiments were being expressed by Arthur Goldberg, Gene Rostow, and even Alan Cranston. It's a new awareness brought on largely, I think, by the debacle in Lebanon.

Penthouse: Isn't there the danger, however, that "terrorism" may be a buzzword comparable to "Communism" or "Communist infiltration" as used by McCarthy? That, in waking up to what's happening, the administration may overreact?

Sterling: I agree, completely. There's definitely the threat that this can grow to menacing proportions. But we're in a grave situation because we can't not do anything. We have to react, recognize and identify the problem. It comes back to the public's understanding of the phenomenon. If the public really understands terrorism it won't stand still for a fascist reaction, what's commonly meant by police state control. Why? Because ultimately terrorism's whole purpose is to force democratic societies into calling out more cops. That's the essence of it; so, again, it comes back to dealing not only with terrorists but with ourselves. The press has been a major player in not informing us, both Democratic and Republican administrations have been misled as well, so we've been caught in a vicious circle. The only way out is an awareness of the problem—not panic and certainly not indifference. I may have an overinflated notion of the public's capability, but the higher the level of public awareness, the more chance you have of preventing the worst. Raising the right question: "How does a democratic society cope with this?" That's the only sound approach I can think of. O

presence attracted so many fans that whole squadrons of police were needed to contain the potentially riotous situation. Idol had been asked to remain at the store long enough to accommodate all those who had been waiting in subfreezing temperatures for signed albums. Nattily dressed, Bill Aucoin precedes Idol's late arrival by a few moments, chatting softly of his client's latest opportunities.

Suddenly Billy sweeps in, his near-sepulchral paleness enlivened for a change by a suntan, his aquiline nose burned—he has just spent a week relaxing in St. Thomas. Heedless of Trader Vic's dress code, he wears a maroon haik that cloaks his shredded black angora sweater, coquettishly baring one shoulder. The outfit is as calculated and iconoclastic as Aucoin's temperament and dress are decidedly conservative. The two men speak a few words to one another, with warmth and respect, the raw jerkiness explosiveness of Billy Idol complemented by the silken-mannered Aucoin. Indeed, one sees Billy Idol as Aucoin's prodigal son returned, tamed in a perceptible way. Aucoin zips off, telling Billy he will be at home later; Billy is left with the option of ringing him up at any hour he chooses.

The contrast is equally striking between Idol and the wrinkled Polynesian waiters who refill drinks and with shaky hands serve him his strict vegetarian regime of steamed vegetables, regarding him with benevolent curiosity. He orders a white-coconut-and-rum cocktail, which arrives in an iced glass shaped like a curvaceous woman, as the subject of his attitude toward women (as well as sex) is raised.

"I don't like people who demean sex," Billy says heatedly, looking at the glass. "Once a woman interviewing me asked if I had had any sexual failures . . . and I said, 'Look, basically, I don't think there's any failure—it's all success. I think it's only an element of degree how you get on with people.' One night you can be actually brilliant and the next night shit with the same person. . . . Sex isn't anything wonderful and magical, it's not anything terrible and awful. It's kind of in between. One night it's great having a wank, one night it's great screwing some bird, one night it's great getting a blow job. What's the big problem?"

As outspoken as he is about his sexuality, he still clings to his personal life, trying to ward off public scrutiny. He has been involved with Perri Lister for years. She is a former dancer with the group Hot Gossip, which performed weekly on the *Kenny Everett Show* in Great Britain. Although in America Billy is the celebrity, in England the couple have been featured in newspaper photographs with Billy referred to as "Perri Lister's boyfriend." It was Perri Lister who portrayed the bride in the *White Wedding* video.

In light of Billy's choice to live in America, the couple has had to face long pe-

riods of separation, their lives divided by careers bound respectively to each country and by those several-week stretches when Billy is on the road. Only recently has Perri seen the possibility of acquiring steady work, which would allow her to live in America on a permanent basis. As for Billy, he has sought companionship on a nightly basis for much of the three years he's spent in the United States.

"Look at those two birds," he remarks, "they've been looking at me. Are they young?" Suddenly growing sheepish, he says, "I don't know quite what to do tonight. I always feel like picking up some extra birds, for a laugh. That's my trouble. Perri's a great bird. She's really sexual, she is. I like girls who are really fucking wild. Cool birds are always a little bit way out. I'm sure *Penthouse* readers will like

to hear Billy Idol says cool birds are way out. Even I'd want to read that."

Outside the Plaza, Billy waits for a cab among elegantly dressed men and women, suddenly made smaller by the hotel's opulence. People begin to smirk and frown at his bristled hair, his swaddle of shreds and cloaks. He seems out of place. But he is oblivious to such scornful attention.

What used to be clothing to him has now become costume; what used to be attitude has now become affectation. And this is probably not the last the Plaza Hotel will see of Billy Idol, a performer who has cleverly managed to survive. Maybe a year from now he'll want to dine at Lutecce, which will require compromise: a sport coat. Perhaps the punk will slowly fall away, leaving just another fabricated rock star. *OT*



Let nothing come between you and true tobacco flavor.

JOB Cigarette Papers channel tobacco taste, never change it.



Show you have no taste.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check or money order
only. Illinois residents
add 8% sales tax. Mail to
"No Taste, c/o Republic
Tobacco, 5100 North
Ravenswood, Chicago, IL
60640."



- T-shirt(s)** — \$3.95, plus 2 booklet covers from JOB Cigarette Papers
Indicate Size S M L XL
- JOB 1.25—24 booklets** at \$11.60 per box
- JOB 1.5—24 booklets** at \$11.60 per box
- JOB sample kit** includes 3 different JOB booklets at \$1.00



Republic Tobacco

5100 N. RAVENSWOOD CHICAGO, IL 60640 (312) 728-1500

You must be over 21 to order. Offer good only in
Continental U.S.A. and offer expires December 31, 1984.